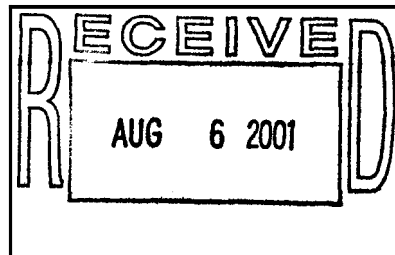


ALLIANCE OF MARINE MAMMAL PARKS AND AQUARIUMS

Dedicated to Conservation through Public Display, Education and Research

August 3, 2001

Ms. **Ann** Terbush
Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East West Highway
Room 13822
Silver Spring, Maryland 2 1910



Dear Ms. Terbush

We are writing to request an extension of the comment period for the recently issued proposed regulations affecting the public display of marine mammals published by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). 66 Fed. Reg. 35209 (July 3, 2001)

We are requesting a 120-day extension of the September 4 comment deadline. **An** extended comment period is required because of the sweeping and extensive nature of the proposed regulations. **Detailed** comments on the proposal will **require** substantial analysis, which cannot be reasonably concluded by September 4.

A preliminary review of the proposed regulations has raised numerous concerns within the public display community about the agency's oversight **as** it pertains to marine mammals in zoological parks and aquariums.

This request for **an** extension of the comment period for an additional 120 days is not likely to interfere with **NMFS**' administration of the MMPA nor the conservation and management of marine **mammals**. The agency **has** been drafting these rules, intended to **implement** the 1994 amendments to the **MMPA**, for seven years. **An** extension of 120 days is a reasonable request to develop thoughtful comments important to a reasonable and effective regulatory regime.

For planning purposes, we would appreciate hearing **back from** you **within** a **week** of receipt of this letter. We appreciate your consideration of our **request**.

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Sincerely,


Steve Olson
American Zoo and Aquarium Association


Marilee Menard
Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums

CC: Dr. Ron DeHaven, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service
Mike Young, Fish and Wildlife Service